

# **Holy Week 2025: Daily Scripture Reading & Reflection Plan**



**April 13-20, 2025**

*"And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" — **Philippians 2:8***

**We LOVE God. We LOVE our Neighbors.  
We Maximize Purpose.**

## Using This Reading Plan

1. **Daily Engagement:** Set aside 15-30 minutes each day for *reading, reflection, and prayer*.
2. **Communal Sharing:** Consider discussing the daily readings with family members or in small groups.
3. **Journal Your Insights:** Record your thoughts and prayers as you journey through Holy Week. Answer the reflection questions at the end of each reading.
4. **Attend Holy Week Services:** Complement your personal study by participating in the church's Holy Week observances.

- ❖ **Palm Sunday Celebration:** Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup> @ 10AM - ASCC
- ❖ **Corporate Prayer:** Tuesday, April 15<sup>th</sup> & Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30AM
- ❖ **WOW Bible Study:** Wednesday, April 16<sup>th</sup> @ 7PM via Zoom
- ❖ **Good Friday Service:** Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30PM – 3401 Hamilton Mason Road, Hamilton, OH 45011
- ❖ **Resurrection Sunday:** Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup> @ 10AM - ASCC

May this Holy Week journey deepen your understanding of Christ's sacrifice and strengthen your faith in His **resurrection power**.

***"But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." — John 20:31***

## Overview of Holy Week

- Holy Week marks the final week of Jesus Christ's earthly ministry, from His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday through His resurrection on Easter Sunday. This reading plan invites you to walk with Christ through these pivotal days, meditating on Scripture passages that reveal the depth of His sacrifice and the power of His resurrection.

### Each day features:

- Primary readings that follow the narrative arc of Holy Week
- Supplementary passages that provide theological context
- Reflective questions to deepen your engagement with the text
- Prayer focus for personal and communal intercession

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## Palm Sunday (April 13, 2025): The Triumphal Entry

### Primary Reading: Matthew 21:1-11

*"The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' 'Hosanna in the highest heaven!'" (Matthew 21:9)*

### Supplementary Readings:

- Zechariah 9:9-10 — The prophecy of the king coming on a donkey
- Psalm 118:19-29 — "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD"

### Exegetical Insights:

The term "**Hosanna**" derives from Hebrew words meaning "**save now**" or "**please save.**" Originally a plea for divine intervention, by Jesus' time it had evolved into a shout of praise. The crowds greet Jesus with messianic expectations, waving palm branches—symbols of victory and nationalism—yet Jesus enters Jerusalem humbly on a donkey, fulfilling Zechariah's prophecy of a peaceful king. This tension between the crowd's expectations and Jesus' true messianic mission sets the stage for the week ahead.

### Reflective Questions:

1. How might the expectations the crowds had for Jesus differ from His actual mission?

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2. In what ways do we still misunderstand Jesus' kingship today?

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3. What "palms" or symbols of victory and acclaim might we need to lay down to truly follow Christ?

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**Prayer Focus:**

Ask God to reveal any false expectations you might have of Jesus and open your heart to embrace His true kingship in your life.

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**Monday (April 14, 2025): Cleansing the Temple**

**Primary Reading: Mark 11:12-19**

*"Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'" (Mark 11:17)*

**Supplementary Readings:**

- Isaiah 56:6-7 — God's house as a house of prayer for all nations
- Jeremiah 7:9-11 — The "den of robbers" reference
- Matthew 21:18-22 — The withered fig tree

**Exegetical Insights:**

Jesus' cleansing of the temple occurs in the Court of the Gentiles—the only place where non-Jews could worship. The merchants and money changers had effectively eliminated space for Gentile worship, contradicting God's inclusive vision. Jesus quotes from both Isaiah and Jeremiah, showing that true worship must be accessible to all and characterized by justice rather than exploitation. The fig tree narrative that frames this event in Matthew's gospel

symbolizes Israel's religious establishment bearing leaves (appearances) but no fruit (true righteousness).

### **Reflective Questions:**

1. What practices or attitudes in your life or in the church today might be hindering others from encountering God?

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2. How does Jesus' action in the temple challenge our understanding of righteous anger?

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3. In what ways might you be bearing leaves without fruit in your spiritual life?

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### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for the courage to examine the "temple" of your own heart and for God's help in removing anything that hinders true worship.

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## **Tuesday (April 15, 2025): Teaching in the Temple**

### **Primary Reading: Matthew 22:15-46**

*"Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Matthew 22:37-39)*

### **Supplementary Readings:**

- Matthew 23:1-39 — Woes to the religious leaders
- Matthew 24:1-51 — Olivet Discourse on the end times
- Mark 12:41-44 — The widow's offering

### **Exegetical Insights:**

Tuesday of Holy Week features Jesus' most extensive teaching, as He faces confrontation from various religious factions in Jerusalem. The questions posed to Jesus—about taxes, resurrection, and the greatest commandment—were designed to trap Him, yet He responds with profound wisdom that reveals both His divine authority and the true nature of God's kingdom. In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus transitions from addressing the temple's future destruction to eschatological themes, interweaving historical and apocalyptic elements that have challenged interpreters for centuries. Throughout these encounters, Jesus consistently reframes religious debates to focus on heart posture rather than mere external compliance.

### **Reflective Questions:**

1. How do Jesus' responses to His challengers reveal His divine wisdom?

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2. What does Jesus' summary of the law as loving God and neighbor tell us about authentic faith?

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3. In what ways might you be more concerned with religious appearances than heart transformation?

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### **Prayer Focus:**

Ask God to align your heart with His priorities and to help you love Him and others with greater authenticity.

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**Wednesday (April 16, 2025): The Anointing & Betrayal**

**Primary Reading: Matthew 26:1-16**

***"She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial." (Mark 14:8)***

**Supplementary Readings:**

- Isaiah 53:3-9 — The suffering servant betrayed
- Zechariah 11:12-13 — The thirty pieces of silver
- John 12:1-8 — John's account of the anointing (occurred earlier)

**Exegetical Insights:**

While Scripture doesn't explicitly mention Jesus' activities on Wednesday of Holy Week, this day is traditionally associated with Judas' plot to betray Jesus and Mary's anointing of Jesus (though John places this earlier). The woman's extravagant act—pouring perfume worth a year's wages—contrasts sharply with Judas' betrayal for thirty pieces of silver (the price for a slave's life in Exodus 21:32). Jesus interprets her act as preparation for His burial, showing His awareness of His impending death. The divergent responses to Jesus—devoted worship versus calculated betrayal—present us with a stark choice in our own relationship with Christ.

**Reflective Questions:**

1. What does the contrast between Mary's extravagant gift and Judas' betrayal reveal about different responses to Jesus?

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2. What might be your "alabaster jar"—something precious you're called to surrender to Jesus?

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3. How does Jesus' defense of the woman challenge our utilitarian attitudes toward worship?

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**Prayer Focus:**

Pray for a heart that responds to Jesus with extravagant devotion rather than calculation or betrayal.

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## Maundy Thursday (April 17, 2025): The Last Supper & Garden of Gethsemane

**Primary Reading: John 13:1-38, Matthew 26:36-46**

*"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." (John 13:34)*

### Supplementary Readings:

- Exodus 12:1-30 — The Passover context
- 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 — Paul's account of the Lord's Supper
- Luke 22:39-46 — Luke's account of Gethsemane (mentioning "sweat like drops of blood")

### Exegetical Insights:

"Maundy" derives from the Latin "mandatum" (commandment), referencing Jesus' new commandment to love one another. On this night, Jesus transforms the ancient Passover meal into the new covenant sacrament we now call **Communion** or the **Eucharist**. His washing of the disciples' feet—a task reserved for the lowest servants—dramatically inverts social hierarchies and exemplifies the servant leadership He calls His followers to embody. In Gethsemane, Jesus experiences profound anguish (Greek: "agonia") as He faces not just physical death but the spiritual weight of bearing humanity's sin. His submission—"**not my will, but yours**"—represents the culmination of a life lived in perfect obedience to the Father.

### Reflective Questions:

1. How does Jesus' institution of the Lord's Supper transform our understanding of the Passover?

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2. What does Jesus' willingness to wash His disciples' feet teach us about true leadership?



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3. What can we learn from Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane about handling our own moments of deep distress?

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**Prayer Focus:**

Pray for strength to follow Jesus' example of humble service and surrender to God's will, even in difficult circumstances.

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**Good Friday (April 18, 2025): The Crucifixion**

**Primary Reading: John 19:1-42**

*"It is finished."* (John 19:30)

**Supplementary Readings:**

- Isaiah 52:13-53:12 — The suffering servant prophecy
- Psalm 22 — "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
- Hebrews 10:1-18 — Christ's once-for-all sacrifice

**Exegetical Insights:**

The Greek word translated "**It is finished**" (**tetelestai**) was commonly written on business documents to indicate "**paid in full.**" Jesus' declaration signifies the completion of His redemptive work and the fulfillment of all messianic prophecies. John's gospel uniquely emphasizes that Jesus' death occurred as Passover lambs were being slaughtered in the temple, underscoring Jesus as the true Paschal sacrifice. The tearing of the temple veil (mentioned in the Synoptic gospels) symbolizes the new direct access to God established through Christ's sacrifice. The Roman soldiers' decision not to break Jesus' legs fulfills the Passover lamb requirement that "not one of his bones shall be broken" (Exodus 12:46), further establishing Jesus as the perfect sacrificial lamb.

**Reflective Questions:**

1. What does Jesus' statement "It is finished" tell us about the completeness of His atoning work?

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2. How does the Isaiah 53 prophecy deepen our understanding of what was happening spiritually during the crucifixion?

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3. In what ways does Christ's suffering challenge our perspective on our own suffering?

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**Prayer Focus:**

Spend time in solemn gratitude for Christ's sacrifice and reflect on what it means that your sins are "**paid in full.**"

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**Holy Saturday (April 19, 2025): The Tomb & Waiting**

**Primary Reading: Matthew 27:57-66**

*"Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard." (Matthew 27:65-66)*

**Supplementary Readings:**

- Psalm 16:9-11 — "You will not abandon me to the realm of the dead"
- 1 Peter 3:18-22 — Christ's proclamation to the spirits in prison
- Romans 6:3-11 — Buried with Christ in baptism

**Exegetical Insights:**

Holy Saturday represents the day Christ's body lay in the tomb—a day of profound silence and apparent defeat. While the Gospels say little about this day, early Christian tradition and

texts like **1 Peter 3:18-22** suggest Christ was active in the spiritual realm, sometimes described as the "harrowing of hell." This mysterious day stands as a powerful metaphor for the times in our own lives when God seems silent, and hope appears lost. The disciples, scattered and fearful, experienced the disorientation of shattered expectations and dashed hopes. Their Saturday experience reminds us that periods of waiting and darkness often precede God's greatest works of redemption.

### **Reflective Questions:**

1. How do you respond to the "Holy Saturdays" in your life—times when God seems silent?

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2. What might the disciples have been thinking and feeling on this day between crucifixion and resurrection?

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3. How does baptism connect us to Christ's death and burial?

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### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for renewed trust in God's faithfulness during times of waiting and apparent silence.

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## **Easter Sunday (April 20, 2025): The Resurrection**

### **Primary Reading: John 20:1-31**

*"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die.'" (John 11:25)*

### **Supplementary Readings:**

- 1 Corinthians 15:1-28 — The centrality of resurrection to Christian faith
- Revelation 21:1-7 — The ultimate resurrection hope

- Colossians 3:1-4 — Living as resurrection people

### **Exegetical Insights:**

The resurrection accounts emphasize that Jesus' resurrection was physical and bodily, not merely spiritual or metaphorical. His transformed resurrected body could eat food and be touched, yet also appear in locked rooms. The Greek word used for "**resurrection**" (anastasis) literally means "**standing up**" or "**rising up**," emphasizing the concrete, physical nature of this miracle. Mary Magdalene's confusion of Jesus with the gardener carries rich theological symbolism—the risen Christ is indeed the "**new Adam**" in the garden of the new creation. The disciples' journey from fear to faith illustrates the transformative power of encountering the risen Christ, a transformation that continues in the lives of believers today.

### **Reflective Questions:**

1. Why is the bodily resurrection of Jesus essential to Christian faith?

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2. How does the reality of resurrection transform our view of suffering and death?

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3. What does it mean to live as "resurrection people" in our daily lives?

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### **Prayer Focus:**

Celebrate the victory of Christ over death and pray for His resurrection power to be evident in your life and in the church.